THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) The difference in the international price of LPG and kerosene varies from time to time. During 2005-06 (1st April to 16th December), the international FOB price of LPG and SKO is as follows:

LPG	$452.78/MT
SKO	$537.60/MT

The present retail selling prices of domestic LPG and PDS Kerosene at New Delhi in terms of Rs per MT is given as under:

LPG	Rs.20,757.04/MT
SKO	Rs.11,366.82/MT

Conversion factors have been based on factors considered for refinery transfer price workings.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. The average international FOB price of LPG for the period April-November 2005 was US$442/MT. against the FOB component charged in the price of LPG (domestic) of US$214/MT. Thus, the price of domestic LPG is far below the global prices. Based on the current level of international prices during April-November 2005, the price of domestic LPG at Delhi should be Rs. 433.50 per cylinder against Rs. 294.75 per cylinder being charged.

HPCL's refinery project at Visakhapatnam

2986. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether HPCL plans to invest Rs. 18000 crores for funding a new 15 million tonne export-oriented refinery at Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh and another Rs. 135 crores to increase capacity of its exiting refinery;

(b) whether HPCL has decided to implement the project through a subsidy and will seek foreign partners for building refinery;

(c) if so, by when a final decision in this regard is likely to be taken; and

(d) by when it is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (d) Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) are considering various projects at or near their Visakhapatnam Refinery. Among these is a low-cost expansion of the existing refinery and a grassroots export-oriented refinery. These projects are at a preliminary stage of discussion. No firm decision has been taken. Therefore,cost estimates or schedules are not yet available.

Adulteration of petroleum products in Bihar

†2987. SHRI BASHISTHA NARAIN SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the adulteration in petroleum products in the rural areas and small towns;

(b) if so, what action Government propose to take to check the same and also to ensure proper supply of commodities to consumers;

(c) the number of raids conducted during the last six months by the officers on the dealers/distributors of various oil companies situated in Buxar district of Bihar; and

(d) the action taken against the persons found guilty during those raids?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) The possibility of adulteration of petrol/diesel by some unscrupulous elements cannot be ruled out due to huge price difference between petrol/diesel and various adulterants available in the market and the easy miscibility of these products with petrol/diesel.

(b) The Government/Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have taken the following steps to check adulteration:

(i) Under the Control Orders issued by the Government to prevent fuel adulteration, under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, State Governments are empowered to take action against those indulging in adulteration. Government have taken up this matter

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.